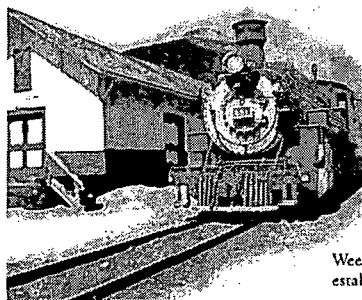


2011 Silverton Jamboree

Please See Ad Inside for more details! August 26th - 28th

Volume 137, issue 9 August 25, 2011



Silverton STANDARD & the MINER

Weekly Miner
established 1875

SILVERTON'S PIONEER NEWSPAPER SINCE 1875

Silverton Standard
established 1889

IN BRIEF

Want to run for school board?

Petitions due Friday

Three seats on the 5-member Silverton school board are up for election on Nov. 1, and candidates wishing to be on the ballot have until Friday, Aug. 26, to submit petitions to the San Juan County Clerk's Office.

The terms of school board members Keri Metzler, Kris Burns and Dan Salazar are coming to an end. Those board members are not term-limited from running again, school officials said.

To qualify for a school board position, a candidate must have been a registered voter in San Juan County for at 12 consecutive months prior to the Nov. 1 election date.

Those wishing to run must submit a written notice of intent to be a candidate and nomination petitions with at least 25 signatures of valid San Juan County voters must be submitted to the San Juan County Clerk's Office by 4 p.m. Friday, Aug. 26.

'Potty Park' flushed; its new name is Columbine Park

The town's "Potty Park" on Blair Street now has an official name.

The Silverton Town Council on Monday night voted to name it Columbine Park, after hearing a request from the Blair Street Historic District Association.

River Workgroup to meet tonight

The River Protection Workgroup for the Animas River is scheduled to meet again tonight (Thursday, Aug. 25) from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Kendall Mountain Recreation Center in Silverton.

Everyone is invited to participate. The purpose of this Workgroup is to make recommendations about how to protect values on the Animas River upstream of Baker's Bridge including several tributaries while allowing for suitable water development to continue.

At this meeting, the detailed Information Sheet about the Animas River will again be carefully reviewed and finalized and the Workgroup will discuss values in the area of focus that need to be protected including:

See BRIEFS, Page 4

IT'S JAMBOREE TIME!

Music festival at Kendall Mountain Aug. 27-29

After a one-year hiatus, the Silverton Jamboree is coming back this weekend, with a wide assortment of music at Kendall Mountain Recreation Area.

"We've got 100 percent Colorado home-grown talent coming," said Melissa Childs, jamboree board member. "We try

to sort of represent different genres from around the state."

The jamboree had previously been held in June. In 2009, the last jamboree faced rainy, cold weather that resulted in less attendance than hoped for.

"We decided to move it to late August," Childs said. "It (the weather) is a crapshoot anyway, but we thought we'd be better off."

See JAMBOREE, Page 4



People dance at the Silverton Jamboree at Kendall Mountain Recreation Area in this 2007 file photo.

THE MIDNIGHT SPECIAL



The Eureka & Palisades Engine #4 spends its time to be a shadowy figure late Friday night at the Silverton depot. The wood-fire locomotive was here over the weekend for Railfest. More photos, Page 7.

EPA: Superfund there — if wanted

By Mark Esper

A handful of abandoned mines near Gladstone are responsible for enough contamination of Cement Creek and the Animas River to justify Superfund listing, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, but that won't happen without community support.

Cement Creek mine sites meet criteria, agency says, but it's up to community

In a Town Hall meeting Thursday, Aug. 18, EPA officials reviewed data from their fall 2010 sampling of Cement Creek and the Animas River. They say water quality is worsening, with zinc, lead and other heavy metals at elevated levels.

This in turn is being blamed for the loss of three of four trout species since 2005 in the upper Animas.

And EPA officials said that while the collaborative approach to water quality in the upper Animas spearheaded by the

Animas River Stakeholders Group has been successful, the worsening situation on Cement Creek has compelled the agency or to study possible Superfund listing.

"The problem is worsening water quality," said Sabrina Forrest, site assessment manager for the EPA in Denver. Forrest explained that while the EPA

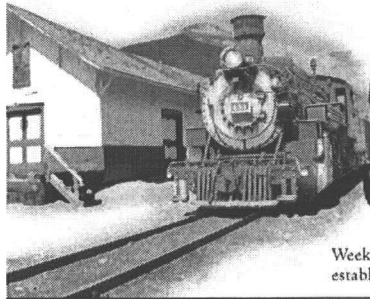
See EPA, Page 6

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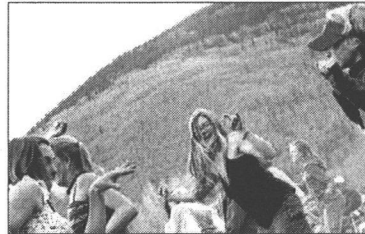
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David Emory/Silverton Standard & the Miner

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Our goals

The *Silvertown Standard & the Miner* is a weekly newspaper written for people interested in the issues and news of Silverton, Colo., and the surrounding San Juan Mountains region. The *Standard* voices a strong sense of community for Silverton and the San Juans as it brings you the issues, characters, landscapes, and the talent of the region. Stressing in-depth, balanced, and thoughtful writing, news, photography, and topical articles on key issues affecting the region, the *Standard* keeps the greater San Juan community informed, entertained, provoked, and engaged in dialogue about the community and its future.



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- Best Education Story
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- Best News Page Design
- Best Editorial Layout & Design
- Best Photo Essay
- Best Special Section
- Best Newspaper Promotion

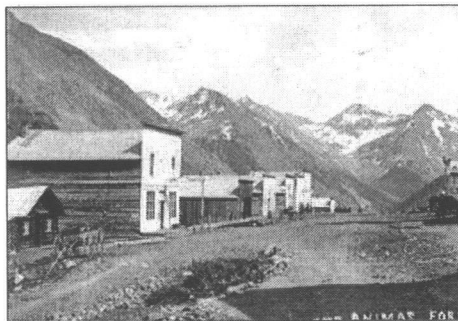
Preserving Animas Forks

By Julie Coleman

On Aug. 1, Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was awarded a grant from the State Historical Fund to stabilize five buildings in Animas Forks.

Animas Forks is a historic abandoned mining town in the heart of the San Juan Mountains and San Juan County. Founded in 1875 at an elevation of 11,160 feet, the mining camp is a testimony to the determination and grit of Colorado's early hard rock miners, and is an icon of Colorado ghost towns and the Alpine Loop Backcountry Byway.

The townsite was strategically situated at the confluence of the East and West Forks of the Animas River, in the center of a region being extensively prospected and developed for hard-rock silver and gold mining. It quickly became a business and residential center for



Historic photo of Animas Forks in the 1880s, looking south down the main street. The small log cabin at the far left may have been the Stein residence with the other buildings down the street on the left being the Stein Brothers store, the Mercer livery, a blacksmith shop, the Health Office Saloon, the Mercer House hotel, and the Bowman drug store.

GUEST OPINION

the area and was incorporated as a municipality in 1881.

After the initial boom of the early and middle 1880s, the town gradually declined in prosper-

ity. Animas Forks suffered a cataclysmic fire in 1891 that resulted in it becoming a virtual ghost town. The establishment of the Gold Prince Mill on the

See COLEMAN, Page 5



Rain returns to our realm

By Freddie Canfield

Rain clouds returned to our realm this week with considerably more vigor than we have seen since the first four days of August.

Friday and Saturday were productive in the precipitation department. Otherwise we have had officially nonmeasurable precipitation with the exception of last Wednesday, when this weather week began, and Tuesday, when it ended.

Rainbows also made their appearance Friday and again on Monday. Interestingly enough the end of the rainbow occurred twice from my vantage point, in precisely the same location. That being the Mayflower Mill.

My question to you, good readers: Is this an indication of something? Perhaps an investigative visit is in order. I hear tell that John Richardson and his crew have made some fine restorative improvements. Go check them out.

Oh what a wonderful week it was! More music than anything imaginable manifested itself in delightful and diverse forms, popping up all over like mushrooms after sustained monsoon showers.

In addition to all of that human-generated audio expression, the low, owlish "hoot" of the Eureka & Palisades #4 ushered in Railfest once

WEATHER AND OBSERVATIONS

Date	High	Low	Precip., conditions
Aug. 17	81	34	Slight overcast
Aug. 18	78	40	Light overcast
Aug. 19	69	40	.26", virtually clear
Aug. 20	77	41	.18", partly cloudy
Aug. 21	76	41	Clear
Aug. 22	74	38	Clear
Aug. 23	78	38	Virtually clear

again.

The Eureka is the quintessential manifestation of mechanical beauty — both in form and in motion.

Many of us gathered around and breathed in steam from those slow-moving cylinders the first thing on Saturday morning. Watching the new light of early morning sun brighten and reflect off of brass, copper, lacquered wood, blackened steel and pinstripping on that exquisite minuscule 4-4-0 is beyond this wordsmith's descriptive abilities.

Not to be missed next year at this time along with our very own 315 under steam too.

Enjoy summer while it lasts. Lots more to share with you next week.

FROM THE STANDARD MAIL CAR



Thank you, Silverton, for being ... majestic

Editor:

A month ago our friend, R.E. Hudson, gave us the trip of a lifetime to come and stay in his cabin at Howardsville. We were here by Aug. 2 and the only word for this area and people is majestic.

Jackie at the library has been so kind to us, along with every shopkeeper and person we've met here.

We felt so overwhelmed at the talent in the Community Singalong and words can't describe what I felt at the 30th Great Western Rocky Mountain Brass Band Festival.

Since we don't have television out here we've really enjoyed the volunteer radio station, KSJC, 92.5 FM. Thank you for your great thrift store — for the station also.

It's a treasure hunt. There's nothing I'd want to change about this area — the mountains, flowers, river and rocks (I love rocks).

It will be so hard to leave and go back to the heat and humidity of South Carolina (I love it too) cow country, but what memories we have.

God bless you year-rounders. You're tough, but have been so kind.

Thank you for this majestic time in a majestic land.

Patty Taylor
Conway, S.C.

P.S. What a terrific museum and farmers market. There's too much to list.

I love you, Silverton!

Notorious Blair Street enjoys a renaissance

Editor:

Thank you for your cooperation in retaining the Old West atmosphere along Blair Street. It has been one year and the Blair Street Historic District Association is still active in improving the notorious street.

Countless volunteer hours have made this possible. To all that contributed in any way — thank you! A special thanks goes out to Cindy Bryant, Jerry Bryant, Mike Geryak and Tommy Wipf. Their tireless efforts and energy have been instrumental in the completion of many projects — whiskey barrel planters, cash register donation barrels, street signs, directional signs, and hitching posts.

Victorian-era pictures have been painted on storefront windows and the newly painted trash barrels have added to the

See LETTERS, Page 4

Write to us

The *Silvertown Standard & the Miner* welcomes letters to the editor. Send letters via e-mail to editor@silvertownstandard.com, or via snail mail to, Editor, *Silvertown Standard & the Miner*, P.O. Box 8, Silverton, CO 81433.

EPA, from Page 1

considers the problem to be worthy of the National Priorities List (NPL) under the Superfund law, local support would be required as well as a sign-off from the governor.

"It's eligible for listing, but community support is needed for that," Forrest said. And if the Gladstone sites were to be eventually put on the NPL, "the community would still have a huge voice on how this would be done."

The goals, Forrest said, are to reduce risk to public health and improve water quality.

"There are elevated levels of metals in fish people are eating," Forrest said.

"If listing is supported (locally) then the EPA will request a letter from the governor," Forrest said.

She said community support could come in the form of letters, a resolution from the San Juan County commissioners, and support from the stakeholders group.

Meanwhile, the EPA is planning a Sept. 16 site tour at Gladstone for those interested in getting a better idea of the situation on the ground up there.

Forrest says the EPA hopes it can determine by Dec. 20 if there is enough local support for NPL listing to proceed. Under that timetable, the listing could be

made official by March 2012.

The preliminary assessment work focused on a cluster of mine sites at and above Gladstone, including the American Tunnel, Gold King Number 7 level, the Mogul and Grand Mogul and the Red and Bonita mines.

Peter Butler of Durango, a steering committee member for the Animas River Stakeholders Group, which was formed as a collaborative approach to water quality issues in 1994, said Cement Creek has seen a steady increase in metals loading since a treatment plant at Gladstone was shut down in 2004.

Up to 845 gallons per minute of acid mine drainage is pouring into Cement Creek from just four abandoned mines above Gladstone.

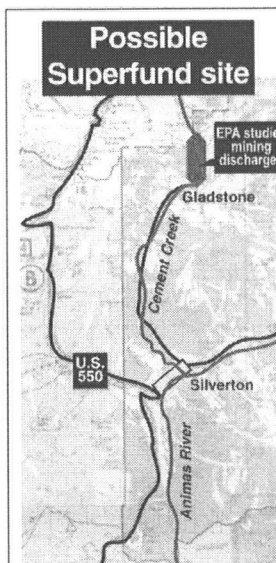
"That's a very substantial amount," Butler said.

Butler said the upper Animas was meeting EPA aquatic life standards in the late 1990s at the sampling station at Baker's Bridge, just above Hermosa.

"And we were still meeting the standards in 2003," Butler said. But he said since then, "we've been exceeding acute and chronic standards quite a bit."

And Butler pointed to "biological evidence" of a growing problem.

A 2005 fish survey on the



About Superfund:

Superfund is officially called the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act.

Enacted by Congress in 1980, it created a tax on the chemical and petroleum industry to establish a trust fund for major environmental cleanups.

And the law provides for liability of persons responsible for releases of hazardous wastes.

The first step of the process for listing Superfund sites is for the EPA to do a preliminary assessment and inspection. If the site is deemed hazardous enough, it is placed on a National Priorities List and a plan is developed to remediate the contamination.

upper Animas found four species of trout in the Cascade Creek area. But the 2010 survey found only one of those species left.

And the ones that disappeared happened to be the ones most sensitive to heavy metals loading.

At this point, Butler said possible solutions include various scenarios for a water treatment plant on Cement Creek, bulkheads for the four mines discharging the most, or some combination of that.

Then comes the question of who pays. Butler said options include seeking damages from Sunnyside Gold's parent company, Kinross; luring a large mining company to reopen the Gold King and take on the cleanup liability; taking an incremental approach with a pilot treatment project that could be expanded; invoking Superfund; or a combination thereof.

Jennifer Lane, community involvement coordinator for the

EPA, said the agency is planning to schedule "listening sessions" starting next month.

"The ball is really in your court," Lane told about 60 local residents and others at the meeting upstairs in Silverton Town Hall. "We need to hear from you all."

But some at the meeting expressed skepticism of the need for Superfund.

John Ferguson, a mining engineer from Silverton, said "the EPA is asking us to stake our livelihoods and our community on one set of samples." He said the agency's laboratory procedures have been questioned in the past.

Forrest told Ferguson that the EPA also takes into consideration water sampling done by others.

Todd Hennis of Golden, who described himself as the "unfortunate owner of the Gold King and Mogul mines," said the EPA has been spinning "fairy tales."

"The problem started in 2000 when water started coming out of the Mogul," Hennis said. He said that was a result of the American Tunnel bulkheads causing water to back up. The water table has since risen an estimated 1,000 feet, causing acid mine drainage to seep from ever higher points on the mountain.

Hennis accused state officials of engaging in "pollution trading" with Sunnyside Gold, with a consent decree letting the mining firm off the hook for water quality problems in the Gladstone area.

"The state of Colorado has a huge responsibility for this situation," Hennis said. "Sunnyside walked out of this district and their \$5 million bond was returned."

Hennis said the best solution would be for a mining firm to reopen the Gold King and assume responsibility for the water quality issues.

Hennis said he thinks there is \$700 million in gold still retrievable from the Gold King mine.

"That could be 200 jobs for 20 years," Hennis said.

In the meantime, Hennis said Sunnyside's parent company, Kinross, "can fund operations of a treatment plant here and we can avoid the Superfund stigma."

Kay Zillich, hydrologist with the Bureau of Land Management, noted that agency, it turns out,

"If (Superfund) listing is supported (locally) then the EPA will request a letter from the governor."

Sabrina Forrest, site assessment manager, EPA

"The EPA is asking us to stake our livelihoods and our community on one set of samples."

John Ferguson, mining engineer

"The state of Colorado has a huge responsibility for this situation."

Sunnyside walked out of this district and their \$5 million bond was returned."

Todd Hennis, owner of the Gold King Mine

"We're supportive of clean-water initiatives. But we're not supportive of the damage that can be done from the perception of a Superfund site."

Aaron Brill, owner, Silverton Mountain Ski Area

actually owns the American Tunnel portal (by a matter of inches).

"It comes to the surface on BLM land about that far," Zillich said, spreading her arms apart. She said the agency might even be able to come up with funding for a treatment plant, but not for actual operations.

And Zillich said the BLM "could pursue cost recovery from potentially responsible parties."

She said the BLM figures there are "twenty-something companies we may want to approach about potential liability."

County Board Chairman Emie Kuhlman worried about the longer haul.

"You're going to have to treat it forever," Kuhlman said of the mine discharges. "The long-term responsibility is the problem."

Aaron Brill, owner of Silverton Mountain Ski area near the mines in question, said the stigma aspect is a huge concern of his.

"The image of a Superfund site can't be understated," Brill said. He said he wants the water quality problem to go away, but he doesn't want his visitors to leave too.

"We're supportive of clean-water initiatives," Brill said. "But we're not supportive of the damage that can be done from the perception of a Superfund site."

He said the EPA needs to do "proper marketing" of the CERCLA law.

THANKS!

The Hardrockers Holidays Committee would like to thank all our sponsors and donors for their support. And thanks to everyone who helped make the 2011 Hardrockers Holidays a success!

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- Silverton Artworks
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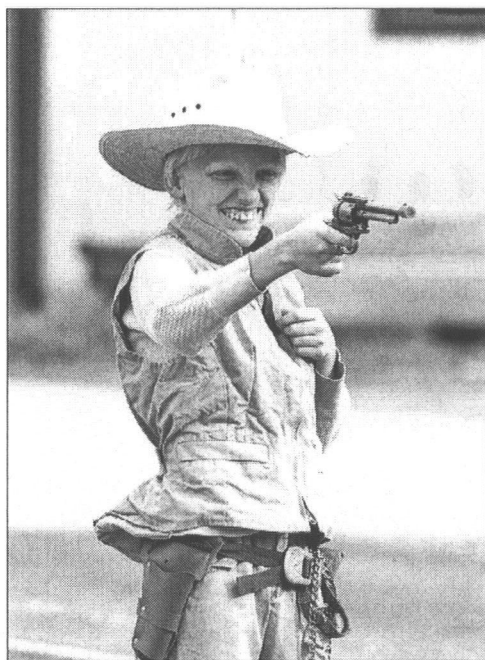
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YOUNG GUN



David Emory/Silverton Standard & the Miner Association.
Bowen Coates is the youngest member of the Silverton Gunfighters Association.

COLEMAN, from Page 2

eastern edge of the town resulted in a resurgence from 1905 to 1910.

With closure of the Gold Prince Mill in 1910, another devastating fire in 1913, and the shutdown of the Bagley Tunnel in 1914, the town once again fell into obscurity, with only sporadic residential use from the 1920s to 1960s.

The site, which is subject to extreme weather conditions, particularly cold temperatures and deep snow during winter and heavy visitation during the summer, is in urgent need of stabilization.

The MSI grant is a milestone in the long history of preserving one of Colorado's most famous ghost towns. Many volunteers and partnerships have been involved in the care of this historic site going back to the 1970s when Loren Lew and volunteers from the San Juan County Historical Society re-roofed the much loved Duncan House.

In the 1990s VISTA volunteers along with Bev Rich and the San Juan County Historical Society and the BLM took their turn at maintaining the buildings.

Last year the Town of Silverton, with funding from a Preserve America grant, in partnership with San Juan County, who received funding from a State Historical Fund grant, took their turn at keeping the preservation ball rolling and were able to contribute a Historic Structure Assessment of Animas Forks which was written by David Singer of Silverton Restoration Consulting.

This assessment formed the basis of the current MSI grant to the State Historical Fund. Additionally, the San Juan Mountain Association in partnership with the BLM and the State Historical Fund were able to sponsor the listing of Animas

Forks on the National Register of Historic Places in March of this year. Jon Horn of Alpine Archaeology wrote the extremely well received National Register Nomination. The San Juan Mountain Association's Site Stewardship Program has also been monitoring Animas Forks for over 7 years helping to keep an eye on the buildings and encouraging people to "visit with respect."

The current State Historical Fund grant and matching BLM funds which MSI has received will stabilize the beloved Duncan House which dates to 1879 and is one of the most photographed ghost town buildings in Colorado.

It will also stabilize the 1906-07 Charles and Alma Gustavson House along with three other historic buildings. This grant comes not a moment too soon as just last week someone was found removing boards from one of the buildings "to make picture frames."

Unfortunately, such threats to the buildings are common. This grant will address critical stabilization and safety issues to keep the buildings standing for future generations to enjoy.

Animas Forks is a treasure of the San Juans which many, many volunteers and partners have worked so very hard to preserve for more than 30 years. Many thanks to all the volunteers who contributed their time and hard work, the partners who generously contributed funds, and the all the people who helped out with their great letters of support!

MSI is very pleased to take its place in the history of saving this most important site! Here's to another hundred years of Animas Forks! Thanks everyone!

Julie Coleman is an archaeologist for the San Juan Public Lands Office.

Two injured as car goes over the edge near Bear Creek

Two women were injured late Sunday afternoon, Aug. 21, when the passenger car they were in went over the edge on U.S. 550 near the Bear Creek Bridge in Ouray County.

The Colorado State Patrol said the Kimberly Leppke, 52,

of Albuquerque and her mother, Jean Hall, 78, of Montrose were in a 2002 Toyota Avalon. Leppke told police she thinks she dozed off.

The car plunged about 70 feet into the canyon.

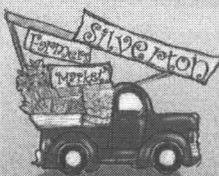
The State Patrol says Hall suffered incapacitating injuries and Leppke had minor injuries.

Leppke was charged with

careless driving causing bodily injury.

Ouray Mountain Rescue Team and the Extrication Team assisted with the rescue.

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